

Connecticut General Assembly
Testimony on This Day of March 7, 2014
Before Committee on Environment, In Support of Senate Bill 316 AN ACT REQUIRING THE
LABELING OF FOOD PRODUCTS THAT ARE PACKAGED IN MATERIALS THAT CONTAIN
BISPHENOL-A

Joyce Acebo-Raguskus, Chair Diesel Cleanup, Environmental Concerns Coalition,
Clean Water Action/ Advocate/Coalition for A Safe & Healthy CT,
174 Eastern Parkway, Milford, CT

Good morning. My name is Joyce Acebo-Raguskus, from Milford CT. Thank you for this privilege to speak before you.

I look to your support on SB 316. Like CT's GMO labeling bill, the U.S. citizen owns rights to full disclosure, especially of this known estrogenic, bisphenol-a, in packaging materials. There is documentation that no safe dose applies to bisphenol-a. With estrogenic activity, very minute amounts of BPA can and do disrupt the delicate endocrine system, especially in very early stages in fetal development, and too, effects do not always manifest until years later. In men, under the age of 40 prostate cancer patients have very high levels of BPA. The breast in women are, especially vulnerable to exposures to this estrogenic chemical.

Bisphenol-a bleeds from packaging materials into the content and contaminates, delivering to our palates delectable disguise. CT families and consumer's need to have some control about ingesting BPA especially with other environmental exposures through contact/skin and air. Businesses use roughly 8 BILLION POUNDS OF BPA PER YEAR AND THAT WAS IN 2011! This is another toxic chemical that does not belong in umbilical cords majestically designed to bring nourishment to the unborn fetus and human bodies. Change is necessary here.

Not labeling such contaminates is at the cost of huge health risks to the well being of all. We must have labeling to BEGIN to discern what products may be safer than others. We have the right to knowledge of what we are feeding ourselves and our families. "We are what we eat", as my 95 year young Mother always voiced, and she had the luxury of growing up eating 'recognizable' food from their organic garden. I was raised on processed foods and plastic packaging. (I also detected breast cancer at a very early age and stage).

BPA in baby bottles was Connecticut's trophy chemical toxic ban; we were the first state in our nation to do so, and for good reason. The toxic health factors associated with Bisphenol-A, a known endocrine disruptor, ('endo' is Greek for 'inside') coined as far back in 1991 with Theo Colborn, travels, as mentioned, through the umbilical to the fetus, and disrupts and interrupt s the hormone messengers. This is just the beginning of their destructive path, which may include sexual birth defects, testicular cancer or a decrease in semen. The American Medical Association adds diabetes heart disease and liver abnormalities. Yale University School of

Medicine research reports this toxin to break connections between brain cells, possibly leading to memory and learning impairment.

As I reported in last year's testimony, the 'cost' of this issue is the cost of the quality of life, and in some cases the loss of that life, of our children and in stages of development. **Non-disclosure of labeling, keeping our society ignorant at the price of a child is indeed costly.** This is not a 3rd world country, yet we have little or no protective regulations to test well over 83,000 chemicals used in manufacturing consumer goods, either before or after they are approved for use. This is a major source of exposure for our children, while the European Union and Canada have established high chemical regulations and high human health priority.

I encourage each of you on our Environment Committee to listen to yesterday's, March 6th **NPR's ON POINT with Tom Ashbrook, "The Safety of Plastics, Beyond BPA,"** an **excellent and comprehensive** program of scientists, educators and citizens on 'The Safety of Plastics, Beyond BPA. It is a timely program for us this session preparing to prioritize our protective legislative bills.

I shall leave you with one comment from a scientist's that called into NPR and is employed in the packaging industry in Wisconsin, "If it comes in a package, you don't eat it."

Difficult indeed, especially when labeling is not even in favor of full disclosure. Let's make a change here again in Connecticut.

I fully support Senate Bill 316 and urge you to come to the table and know what you are ingesting and lend your vote to this labeling environmental health bill.

References: NPR ON POINT, MARCH 6, 2014 Tom Ashbrook , The Safety of Plastics, Beyond BPA
George Bitner, Mariah Blake: Reporter for Mother Jones.@mariahCBLAKE, R Thomas Zoeller,
Professor of Biology, University, Massachusetts, Amherst, Shuk-Mei Ho, Chair Department of
Environment Health, University Cincinnati College of Medicine

Joyce Acebo-Raguskus
174 Eastern Parkway
Milford, Connecticut 06460